

SENATE RESOLUTION 12
By Harper

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Bishop Dr. Michael Lee Graves, Founder and Senior Pastor of The Temple Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Bishop Dr. Michael Lee Graves; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the elected representatives of the State of Tennessee should pause to pay tribute to those exemplary citizens who gave unselfishly of themselves, their time, and their talents to improve the quality of life for their fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Michael Lee Graves was most assuredly one such remarkable citizen, whose life and ministry demonstrated his unwavering commitment of service to the Lord and to the people whose spiritual lives he guided; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Dr. Michael Lee Graves was the Senior Pastor and Founder of the Temple Church, a position that he held since he and his wife, Eleanor Newhouse Graves, founded the church twenty-eight years ago; and

WHEREAS, described as the "devoted, loving, and respected shepherd of the flock" at The Temple Church, Bishop Graves will be sorely missed by his congregation, staff, and family; and

WHEREAS, during his twenty-eight years of ministry at The Temple Church, Dr. Graves led the church through many different phases of growth and development, both spiritually and physically; at its founding on August 8, 1977, the church was little more than the Holy Spirit moving in the hearts of Dr. and Mrs. Graves. Bishop Dr. Graves nurtured the church to the impressive current number of 3,000 members; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the diligence and hard work of this renowned Bishop and his positive message's of hope and encouragement, The Temple Church has been named one of

America's 300 outstanding Protestant churches in a nationwide study funded by the Lilly Endowment; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Graves was widely known as a pastor, evangelist, writer, counselor, broadcaster, consultant, and facilitator and, in November of 2001, The Temple Church unanimously voted to elevate Dr. Graves to Bishop-elect in the Apostolic Succession of Bishops. He was consecrated as Bishop in August of 2002; and

WHEREAS, in preparation for his service to his Lord and Savior, Bishop Dr. Graves earned his Doctorate of Ministry from the United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio; and

WHEREAS, actively involved in his profession, Dr. Graves served with probity as the Publications Director for the National Baptist Publishing Board and as the Vice-Chair of the Middle Tennessee Billy Graham Crusade Executive Committee; and

WHEREAS, this remarkable individual served as a valuable member of the Commission on Evangelism of the Baptist World Alliance, the American Association of Christian Counselors, and, in 2003, Bishop Graves was inducted in to the Martin Luther King, Jr., Board of Preachers at Morehouse College; and

WHEREAS, widely respected within the community and throughout the state, Dr. Graves served with acumen and alacrity on various Boards of Directors, including the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association, the United Way Board of Trustees, and Leadership Nashville; he was also an Emeritus Member of the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees; and

WHEREAS, in honor of Bishop Graves' dedication and devotion, he was given the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Nashville Alumni Chapter Superior Lifetime Achievement Award; and

WHEREAS, Dr Graves was most appreciative of the love, devotion, and constant support that he received from his lovely wife, Mrs. Eleanor J. Newhouse Graves; he was the proud father of four children, Michael II, Ayanna Graves Moore, Ariel Williamson Newhouse, and Dana Guest, and was the doting grandfather to two grandchildren, Preston III and Ravyn Alana; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Graves epitomized the spirit of giving and the level of commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Bishop Dr. Michael Lee Graves, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Bishop Dr. Michael Lee Graves.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.